

The Jewish Weekly

The Professor and the Hot Dog

By Rabbi Yossi Lew

Dr. Velvl Greene was a professor of epidemiology and public health at the University of Minnesota. This was around 1960. Professor Greene was involved in the NASA program to find life on Mars.

My uncle Rabbi Moshe Feller had recently arrived in Minnesota, and became very friendly with Dr. Greene, and they talked a lot.

Rabbi Feller called Dr. Greene and said, "Velvl, I know you're traveling somewhere by plane. Before you take this trip, please do me a favor. Call the airline and order a kosher meal."

Velvl replied, "What? You know I don't keep kosher. If I don't keep kosher in my house, why do I need a kosher meal on the plane?"

Rabbi Feller responded that when the other Jewish passengers hear that Professor Velvl Greene had asked for his kosher meal, it could inspire them as well. Why should they lose out just because he's not there yet?

Velvl responded, "Look, I'm not so sure about all this, but if it is going to make you happy, I'll do you the favor."

Dr. Greene ordered the kosher meal, and boarded the plane the next day. But when the flight attendant came by, she handed him a regular, non-kosher meal. Dr. Greene was ready for this too. Clearing his throat, he declared for everybody to hear, "No, ma'am, I ordered a kosher meal!"

"Your name, please?"

"Professor Velvl Greene."

All heads turned. Professor Greene had ordered a kosher meal! The attendant said, "Okay, I'll be right back."

While fellow passengers were feasting on chicken parmesan or steak, the flight attendant was nowhere to be found. The professor was hungry; his mouth was starting to really salivate. The aromas were stabbing his kishkes! He pushed the little button, and when the attendant returned he said, "My kosher meal?"

She replied, "We're still checking."

After a few minutes, and after everyone on the plane had been served, the flight attendant came to his seat and said, "Um, Dr. Greene, there must have been a mistake. We don't seem to have your meal on the plane."

Dr. Greene was about to blurt out, "Fine, give me another meal." After all, this wasn't his idea. He ate all sorts of food at home. Problem was, how could he ask for that meal after he had just made such a big deal on the plane for everyone to know that Professor Velvl Greene had ordered a kosher meal? How would it look if he suddenly said, "Fine, give me a regular meal?"

But Greene was angry. He was very angry. He was angry at the airline. He was angry at himself

for listening to this nonsense. He was angry at G-d, because the least G-d could do was arrange for his meal to be on this darn plane, especially after Greene had done something nice for G-d! But he was most angry, fuming at Rabbi Feller for convincing him to do this. And Greene decided that he would show him yet.

He landed at Chicago's O'Hare airport at midnight for a one-hour stopover. He arrived at the terminal, and there was still one store open: a non-kosher hot dog stand. The hot dogs looked and smelled good, plump and juicy. There was even hot sauerkraut available. Velvl Greene was very hungry, but he was even more angry than hungry. He therefore headed first to the phone booth and called the rabbi - collect. A collect call in the middle of the night was sure to invite panic. And indeed, Rabbi Feller was deeply concerned that something terrible had happened.

"This is a very upset and hungry Professor Greene calling from O'Hare airport in Chicago," he said. "I'll have you know that they did not have my kosher meal on the plane, and I'm starving. I also want you to know that there is a hot dog stand 20 feet away from me. Before I go ahead and buy one and eat it, I just wanted to wake you up to tell you that I'm going to eat it. I'm going to have it with mustard, onions, relish and kraut. After I finish the first one, I'm going to have a second one!"

The rabbi was quiet for a minute, and then he said, "Velvl, on many occasions you have asked me about the essence of Judaism, what it all comes down to, what it calls forth from within us. Tonight, right now, in this telephone conversation, I'm going to tell you the essence of Judaism. It's about passing the hot dog stand and not buying one. It's about being able to get on your connecting flight without having eaten the hot dog. That's all of Judaism; the rest is commentary."

The professor says, "Feller, you're nuts. I always thought you were nuts; now I know you're nuts. This is all of Judaism? Feller, as every bite of this hot dog goes down my throat, I'm going to be thinking of you and saying your name. I am going to eat this in your honor."

And he hung up the phone.

He headed straight for the stand, stood in line and waited for his turn. He was about to place his order, when something very strange happened. He tried to say, "Can I have a hot dog?" He wanted it, he was hungry, he was angry, and gosh, those hot dogs looked better and better with each rotation of the grill.

But he couldn't.

At that moment, he got it. It wasn't that he was stronger than the hot dog. Or than the craving hunger in his gut. It was that G-d was stronger than that hot dog. And he had to listen to G-d. Not out of fear, not out of guilt, but out of love. And that was Judaism. All of it.

Professor Greene never bought that hot dog, not then, not ever again. That trip changed his life. One small "no" for a hot dog, one great step for a man.

Reprinted from an email of Chabad.org.

It Once Happened...

'For Forgiveness is with You...'

By A.B.S.

Mazel Tov, we gave birth to our sixth son and our joy was great. Right before we were to be discharged from the hospital, the baby began to spasm. After a thorough examination, it was revealed that the baby had internal convulsions even though there were no external signs.

The doctors began to treat with medication that really did not work. I saw that the doctors were greatly embarrassed, and they did not know how to help the baby.

I went to Rabbis for blessings until I came to one Tzaddik who told me that all the problems were because someone had a grudge against me. I tried to think who I might have harmed as this is not my nature to do something like that. I began to call friends past and present, but no one remembered my doing anything to them. I was completely broken.

On the one hand I was exhausted from running to the hospital and taking care of the rest of the family. On the other hand, I was trying to find the person I had harmed. I went to another Tzaddik to ask for a yeshua (salvation). As I approached the Tzaddik's home, someone signaled me to lower my car window and he asked me how to get to the Tzaddik's house.

I starting explaining, but he said, "Is this you?! I do not want anything from you!!!" and he left angry. I recognized him. He used to learn with me many years ago, but I did not remember what I had done to him. I parked the car on the side of the road, ran after him to appease him, but he ran and would not hear a word. I saw there was no reason to chase him since he also wanted to see the Tzaddik.

I decided to wait for him in the Tzaddik's waiting room to try to appease him. My wife was in the car and saw all that happened and prayed that I would be able to appease him. In the courtyard, I went to him as he sat calmly. I approached him with tears and beseeching, but he started shouting for me to leave him alone. Despite his screams, I tearfully begged him to have mercy on me and my family, but it was no use.

Ultimately, my wife approached, crying and begging him for her sake and the sake of the baby, that it was definitely his grudge that was causing our distress, and it has been many years since then and what can he gain, when he can save a Jewish baby? He relented and agreed to forgive me. We took his phone number, and then it was my turn to go into the Tzaddik. and I gave him the note]. The Tzaddik smiled and said, "I see everything has been settled."

Two days later, the man called me to apologize for embarrassing me, and of course we forgave him, we were so glad that we found him. On Sunday, the baby was scheduled for surgery. But instead the doctors decided to stop all medication. Within two weeks all seizures stopped, and the baby's situation improved thank G-d.

Reprinted from an email of Tiv Hakehila.



YF GRAPHICS

Shabbat Times - Parshat Re'eh

Candle Lighting	Motzei Shabbat	Motzei Shabbat ר"ת
Jerusalem	6:56	8:10
Tel Aviv	7:11	8:12
Haifa	7:04	8:13
Be'er Sheva	7:13	8:11



Prayer without a file

The play was repeated daily. When the Dayanim (Rabbinic court judges) came to the Beit Din (Rabbinic court), they saw a young woman sitting by the doorway, holding a book of Tehillim (Psalms), and reading it with teary eyes. She would sit and read chapter after chapter until the end of the court hearings, and when the Dayanim came out, she would leave too.

In those days, Rabbi Mordechai Eliyahu was the youngest Dayan in Israel, only twenty-eight years old. He joined the panel of the Beit Din in Be'er Sheva, and his name became famous for his great scholarship and caring for those who came before him.

Shortly after he was appointed to his position, he noticed a woman sitting every day at the courthouse, reading Tehillim in tears. One day he asked the secretary of the court to invite the woman to come in, at the end of the hearings.

When the woman came in he turned to her and asked, "Tell me, what are you doing here? Why are you sitting by the Beit Din reading Tehillim every day with tears?"

"I recently immigrated from Morocco and was sent to live in Be'er Sheva," the woman began, speaking in broken Hebrew. "In Morocco I married a man who served as a taxi driver, but ten days after our marriage my husband went on a trip to another city, about three hundred miles from our city, and I have not seen him since.

"We were later informed that they had found his taxi smashed following a car accident, and that he was apparently killed, but we received no information as to where his body was and who buried him. The matter was brought before Rabbi Shalom Mashash, who sat in the Casablanca Beit Din, "Until evidence that my husband was indeed killed, I will remain an Aguna," the woman ended her sad story. "I cannot remarry and rebuild my life."

Rabbi Eliyahu looked at her with pity, and the woman continued: "Now, when I immigrated to Israel, I thought that maybe here, there would be a rabbi who could help me remarry and start a family. That's why I come here every day to pray."

The rabbi asked her: "Did you open a file in the Beit Din?"

"Why should I open a file ?! I speak directly to the Creator of the world, I speak to Hashem! ...", the woman replied innocently.

"And why did you not enter the Beit Din to talk to us?" The rabbi wondered.

"After all, you are nothing but messengers!", the woman replied to him from her heart. "I pray to Hashem, to the Creator of the world. My destiny is in His hands alone!"

Rabbi Eliyahu was astonished at the woman's strong faith. He took the details from her and asked her to come to court the next day at nine in the morning.

Rabbi Eliyahu devoted the following hours to inquiries with Moroccan rabbis in an attempt to trace the identities of the undertakers in the area where the wrecked taxi was found. The recommendation he received was to turn to



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Rabbi Yitzchak Abuhatzira, the 'Baba Khaki', who served as the chief rabbi of the cities of Ramla and Lod.

Rabbi Eliyahu ordered a taxi and immediately left for Ramla, to the house of the 'Baba Khaki'. When he told him the details of the matter, the Baba Khaki told him: "You are very lucky. The people in charge of the burial recently immigrated to Israel. One lives in Kiryat Ata and the other in Dimona." He gave Rabbi Eliyahu the address of the two, and Rabbi Eliyahu asked the taxi driver to drive him to Dimona.

When he got to the man's house he saw a Shiva notice hung on the door of the house. This announced that the Jew had passed away in recent days and now his family is sitting 'Shiva'.

Rabbi Eliyahu thought at first to turn around and leave, but since it was the time of Mincha and he had to pray, he said in his heart that he would go inside and maybe it was destined from heaven that he had to come here so that he could pray and also say a Dvar Torah to lift the soul of the deceased.

After the inaugural prayer, Rabbi Eliyahu delivered the Dvar Torah and comforted the mourners. The family members were impressed by the young judge and were interested in the reason for his visit to their home. He told them the story of the Aguna from Morocco, and the efforts he was making in trying to save her.

When he mentioned the taxi driver's story and the scene of the accident, one of the comforters, an elderly Jew, dressed in a traditional Moroccan robe, stood up and said: "I buried the taxi driver with my deceased friend. We both dug the grave where we buried the Jew!"

It became clear to Rabbi Eliyahu that this was the second undertaker, from Kiryat Ata, who had just come to comfort his friend's family. Rabbi Eliyahu was very excited. Releasing a woman from being an Aguna is something that makes every dayan happy and excited, and in particular a young dayan.

He immediately summoned the rabbi of the city, Rabbi Avraham Elmaleh, and together with another rabbi, made a court that collected testimony from the man.

The next day the woman came to the court at nine o'clock, and Rabbi Eliyahu happily told his fellow judges the whole chain of events yesterday. At the end of the hearing he informed the woman that she was now allowed to marry. The woman replied to him in complete innocence: "You see, you told me to open a file, while I prayed to the Creator of the world and He had already arranged everything ...".

The Dayanim were very impressed by the merit that befell the young Dayan, to release a young woman from being an Aguna, and Rabbi Eliyahu said to them: "This is the power of innocent and pure prayers!"

Translated and adapted from Sichat Hashavuah.



המולד יהיה
ביום ראשון,
43 דקות
ו-10 חלקים
אחרי 10
בבוקר

ראש חודש אלול יהיה ביום ראשון ובימי שני
Rosh Chodesh will be Sunday and Monday, Aug 8 & 9

We begin to recite **אורי לידור ה'** on the 2nd day Rosh Chodesh until Shmini Atzeret, some hold until Simchat Torah and some hold Hoshanah Rabbah inclusive. Some begin on the first day of Rosh Chodesh.

We begin to blow Shofar every week day at the conclusion of Shacharit until the day before Erev Rosh Hashanah where we don't blow at all.



This week's Parasha commences with the words "ראה אנכי נותן" "לפניכם היום ברכה וקללה", "See, (singular) I am giving you (plural), today a blessing and a curse".

So, who is Hashem speaking to? Is He speaking to me, to each single, individual Jewish person or is He speaking to the whole nation?

Actually, the answer is both. And we have the very same phenomenon at the beginning of next week's Parasha of Shofim: "שופטים ושוטרים תתן לך בכל שעריך", "Judges and bailiffs, you shall place for you, (singular), in all of your (plural) gates...".

Actually, what we find here is a theme that runs right through the Book of Devarim. We all live with dual responsibility – I live by myself for myself and at the same time, I am an important cog within the wheel of Am Yisrael. When Hashem delivers His commandments, they are addressed to me personally, for my life, for the enhancement of my existence, and at the same time, what I do has a direct impact on the fate of the nation as a whole.

And we find this in Sefer Devarim, so beautifully put, through the two paragraphs of the Shema. They contain a lot of the same material. The Mitzvot, 'To Love Hashem', 'To Study the Torah', 'Tefillin' and 'Mezuzah', however there is a major difference: The first paragraph of the Shema is in the singular, addressed to the individual Jew, while the second paragraph of the Shema is in the plural, addressed to us all.

So, therefore I have that dual responsibility. For example, when it comes to Talmud Torah, I must learn and I must teach, but I also have a communal responsibility – I must guarantee that there are schools in my area, I must support all teaching initiatives for the sake of the nation.

And so too, when it comes to 'Tefillin' and to 'Mezuzah'. I've come across some wonderful Gemachs, to provide Mezuzot for people's homes. Mezuzot cost a lot of money – they're not cheap. And so, there are some wonderfully generous people who contribute towards Mezuzot for everybody's homes, recognizing that we have a responsibility for ourselves but also for all of the homes in our area.

And this very message is presented to us so beautifully by the Prophet Hoshea, who declared: "יהיה מספר בני ישראל כחול הים", "And the number of the Children of Israel shall be like the sand of the sea". Of course, Hoshea was speaking about the remarkable fact that over the years, through the generations, against the odds, we will have great numbers. But why didn't he just talk about 'חול', 'sand' – why 'כחול הים', 'the sand of the sea'?

And the reason I believe is, because 'the sand of the sea' is tightly packed together when it's wet, but at the same time, it's made up of single grains of sand. And so too, we, each one of us, is responsible to ourselves, and at the same time, we must never forget our connection to our people and the responsibility that we have towards our society. So join me and let's pray with all our hearts, for our soldiers and healthcare professionals, and Chevrat Kadisha members worldwide, and for those who need healing, shidduchim, children and parnassah and may we be blessed to have the most awesome, gorgeous, beautiful, peaceful, healthy, amazing, relaxed, spiritual, loving and sweet Shabbat.

The Jewish Weekly's *Yossi*

PARSHA FACTS

NUMBER OF MITZVOT: 55
MITZVOT ASEH: 17
MITZVOT LO TAASEH: 38

NUMBER OF PESUKIM: 126
NUMBER OF WORDS: 1932
NUMBER OF LETTERS: 7442

HAFTORA:
 Yeshayahu 54:11- 55:5 (עניי סוּעֵרָה). (this is the third of seven Haftorot, [the Seven Haftorot of Consolation] that precede Rosh Hashanah). Some including Chabad, have the custom to add the first and last Pesukim of the Haftora "Machar Chodesh".

Shabbat Mevarchim Chodesh Elul
 Rosh Chodesh - Sunday & Monday - August 8 & 9.

This week we study Chapter 5 of Pirkei Avot

Laws & Customs: Month of Elul

The Jewish Weekly

For the year 5781

(Up to Erev Rosh Hashanah)

According to Nittei Gavriel, Mishna Berurah and Shulchan Aruch Harav

Based on Rabbi Shmuel Lesches's Halachah Sheets

Compiled by Yossi Fraenkel in memory of his grandparents

ר' ראובן בן הרב משה אליעזר הלוי ע"ה וחי' ברכה בת ר' נפתלי משה ע"ה רבינוביץ

ר' יוסף בן ר' אורי ע"ה ומלכה בת ר' יצחק צבי הלוי ע"ה פרנקל

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🕊 MONTH OF ELUL

On Erev Rosh Chodesh Elul, people give extra Tzedakah.

It is a Yerushalmi Minhag to go to Kivrei Tzadikim on Erev Rosh Chodesh Elul, there are some who specially go to Mearat Hamachpela and Kever Rachel.

On Rosh Chodesh Elul, Moshe Rabbeinu ascended Har Sinai to receive the second set of Luchot. He returned with them on Yom Kippur, with Hashem having granted complete forgiveness for the sin of the golden calf. These forty days are an especially auspicious time for Teshuvah.

The Arizal taught that the thirteen attributes of Divine Mercy are revealed in the month of Elul, assisting in one's efforts to do Teshuvah. The Baal Hatanya explained this idea with the famous parable of Melech B'Sadeh – the King in the field. The month of Elul is thus known as the Chodesh Horachamim (month of mercy), and the gates of mercy are open to all who wish to come close to Hashem through Teshuvah, Tefillah and Torah. These ideas should be publicized as much as possible.

Elul is the month of preparation to usher in a new year replete with good and blessing, both physically and spiritually.

The word Elul is an acronym for a number of Pesukim alluding to the ideas of Torah, Tefillah, Tzedakah, Teshuvah and Geulah. The month of Elul is an appropriate time to increase in all of these matters.

One should increase learning, particularly those topics applicable to the Avodah of the month of Elul.

One should also increase in Ahavat Yisrael and Gemilat-Chessed.

Elul is the "month of reckoning". During this month, one should make an accurate assessment of all one's thoughts, words and deeds, and reflect on all the experiences that occurred during the course of the year. One should improve and strengthen one's qualities, and at the same time, regret and correct one's deficiencies – both the errors and wrongs that were committed, as well as those things which were not performed as well as they could have been. One should resolve for the future to fulfil Mitzvot in the best possible manner; to be more diligent with regards to Torah and Tefillah; and to correct one's negative Middot as well as acquire positive Middot.

During the month of Elul, according to the Sephardic communities, Selichot is recited daily. (The Ashkenazi communities start Selichot this year, Motzei Shabbat, August 28th.)

During Elul, one should be enthused with much Simcha, in recognition of the special closeness that Hashem shows us – "The King is in the field".

Even though Elul is a time to arouse others to Teshuvah, this should be done in a pleasant and

humble way, and not by G-d forbid saying harsh things about others.

🕊 L'DAVID HASHEM ORI

We begin reciting L'David Hashem Ori on Rosh Chodesh. Chabad and some other Chassidim start on the **first** day whilst everyone else starts on the **second** day. During Shacharit, some recite it after Aleinu and some, including Chabad, recite it after Shir Shel Yom (or after Borch Nafshi on Rosh Chodesh). Chabad and some others recite it during Mincha before Aleinu. Some communities recite L'David Hashem Ori at Mincha after Aleinu, and some only after Ma'ariv. When davening Mincha with a Minyan who says it after Ma'ariv, one must still recite Aleinu together with them. If one needs to defer L'David Hashem Ori as a result, he should recite it after Aleinu and before Al Tirah.

🕊 SHOFAR

Shofar is blown during the month of Elul, most have the custom to begin on Monday, the second day of Rosh Chodesh and some on the first day. The purpose of hearing the Shofar is to arouse feelings of Teshuvah.

Some have the custom to blow Shofar also after Mincha or Maariv. Those who blow Shofar after Maariv, should do so also on Motzei Shabbat

Some have the custom to blow just Tekiah-Shevarim-Teruah-Tekiah and others, including Chabad, blow ten sounds. [Tekiah-Shevarim-Teruah-Tekiah; Tekiah-Shevarim-Tekiah; Tekiah-Teruah-Tekiah.]

If one was unable to hear the Shofar with a Minyan, he should still endeavor to hear the Shofar.

During Elul, one does not need to repeat the sounds, if the Shofar was Passul (e.g. it had a crack or hole). Similarly, one does not need to repeat any sounds blown incorrectly (e.g. the Tekiah was too short). If the Ba'al-Tokeah chooses to fix his mistake, he certainly does not need to redo the entire section, as he would, were it Rosh Hashana.

🕊 OTHER CUSTOMS OF ELUL

There is a tradition from the Ba'al Shem Tov to recite three extra chapters of Tehillim each day of Elul. Ideally, these should be recited immediately after the Tehillim that is normally said at the end of Shacharit.

If one neglected to recite these chapters of Tehillim on the appropriate day, he should do so at the earliest opportunity.

Beginning on the first day of Rosh Chodesh, most, including Chabad, have the custom to wish (both in person as well as in writing): "Ketivah V'Chatima Tovah L'Shana Tova U'Metukah". [The Lubavitcher Rebbe included these wishes at the end of his letters. From Rosh Chodesh

onwards, he would write only "Ketivah V'Chatima Tovah", and would begin adding "L'Shana Tova U'Metukah" from around the 18th of Elul onwards.]

Although the basic requirement is to check Mezuzot and Tefillin twice every seven years, some have the custom of checking them every Elul (unless they were checked within the last 12 months).

🕊 DATES IN ELUL

6 Elul – Shabbat Parshat Shoftim. The sixth chapter of Pirkei Avot is recited.

13 Elul – Shabbat Parshat Ki Teitzei. When reading the last Passuk of the Parsha, the word Zeicher is read twice, first with a Tzeirei (Zeicher), and then again with a Segol (Zecher).

The first and second chapter of Pirkei Avot is recited. The opening Mishna ("Kol Yisrael") and concluding Mishna ("Rabbi Chananya") are recited only once.

15 Elul – Being thirty days before Sukkot, one begins learning its Halachot. This thirty-day period should also be utilized to ensure that the Chag needs of the poor are met, as well as planning Sukkot festivities.

18 Elul – The birthday of the Baal Shem Tov and the Baal Hatanya. On this day, the Chabad Rebbeim would wish one a "Chag Sameach".

The last 12 days of Elul (18-29 Elul) correspond to the 12 months of the year. On each of these days, one should make a reckoning of the corresponding month, and make all necessary corrections.

20 Elul – Shabbat Parshat Ki Tavo. The third and fourth chapter of Pirkei Avot is recited by all. The opening Mishna ("Kol Yisrael") and concluding Mishna ("Rabbi Chananya") are recited only once.

🕊 27TH ELUL "SHABBAT MEVARCHIM"

Shabbat Parshat Nitzavim. We don't bentch the new month before Musaf, however Av Harachamim is recited. The Baal Shem Tov explains that Hashem Himself bentches the month of Tishrei, and with this power, we bentch the other months of the year.

Many make a kiddush after davening, in honor of "Shabbat Mevarchim".

Tzidkatecha is recited.

One learns the final two chapters of Pirkei Avot after Mincha. The opening Mishna ("Kol Yisrael") and concluding Mishna ("Rabbi Chananya") are recited only once.

Vi'hi Noam and V'atah Kaddosh are omitted on Motzei Shabbat.

🕊 SELICHOT

Due to the very varied customs on Selichot, we advise everyone to make themselves familiar with their own particular customs.



The Jewish Weekly

will be releasing a Tishrei guide of
Stories, Halachot and Minhagim